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Short Cab Ride in India Began Her Odyssey

Shortly before 7 P.M. on March 6, a Monday, a trim, well-dressed woman with auburn hair finished packing a single suitcase, went to a telephone in the Soviet Embassy hostel in New Delhi and called a taxi. She picked up her bag and waited at the door. Five minutes passed. The taxi did not arrive. Ten minutes. No taxi. Something had gone wrong.

What to do? Should she call again? People went in and out of the entrance. Some looked at her curiously but went about their business. The woman waited a few minutes more, then resolutely went back to the telephone and called another taxi. In a few moments it arrived. She picked up her bag, walked through the door and entered the cab.

"Take me to the American Embassy," she said in a pleasant low voice that had only a trace of a Russian accent.

Reconstruction of Odyssey

So began the odyssey that brought Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva, to United States soil yesterday. Here is a reconstruction of that odyssey compiled from many sources.

The act of summoning the taxi had been long in gestation — many, many years as Stalin's daughter has made plain to those with whom she has spoken since entering the alien world in which she has chosen, at least for a time, to make her home.

It was an act whose origins were deep and complex; in part personal and, in part deeply philosophical.

"It was my own decision," Mrs. Alliluyeva said in the statement written by herself and made public on her arrival in the United States, "based on my own feelings and experiences, without anyone's advice or help, or instruction." It was a decision that had matured swiftly and unexpectedly, almost on the spur of the moment.

As the Shadows Fell

Now, on that March evening as the quickly falling Indian shadows deeply marked the broad embassy plaza she walked up the shallow steps, entered the fretwork foyer of the United States Embassy and, explained to a puzzled Marine sergeant that she was Svetlana Alliluyeva, daughter of Stalin, and she wished urgently to speak to the Ambassador.

The drama touched off by Mrs. Alliluyeva, who uses her mother's maiden name, was to involve several governments — the United States, the Indian, the Soviet, the Italian and the Swiss. But the major [illegible] —though this could not have been predicted on that night in New Delhi—would be played not by statesmen or political figures but by two quiet, bookish private citizens who chanced to be close neighbors across three-shaded lawns in Princeton, N.J. They were George F. Kennan, former ambassador to Moscow and in recent years a scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study, and Edward S. Greenbaum, a former brigadier general and long-time partner in a legal firm specializing in literary and publishing affairs.

On the evening of March 6, both Mr. Kennan and Mr. Greenbaum were pursuing the even tenure of their ways.

Kennan Wrote Memoirs

Mr. Kennan had just completed a monumental task, the writing of his memoirs, and before the end of the week he would deliver the manuscript to his publishers. He had also completed the editing of a lesser manuscript, a journal drawn from his reports to the State Department from Prague, where he was stationed in 1938-39.

Mr. Greenbaum, having played a major role in the arduous politico-literary struggle over William Manchester's book, "The Death of a President," had turned his attention to more mundane matters of law.

Neither man had any premonition of the whirlwind events that lay immediately ahead. Nor, in any precise detail, had Mrs. Alliluyeva, who at 42 had come to India on Dec. 20, bearing the ashes of Brijesh Singh, the 59-year-old Indian whose death in Moscow on Oct. 31 had shattered her life. She had considered Mr. Singh her husband although Soviet authorities refused to permit their marriage.

She spent four days at the Soviet Embassy in New Delhi, situated a few hundred yards from the United States Embassy, and then, on Christmas Eve, went to Kalakankar, a town on the Ganges, 75 miles southeast of Lucknow, in Uttar Pradesh Province, where Mr. Singh's family had long held sway as feudal landlords.

Loved Indian Countryside

She fell in love with the beauty and simplicity of life in the Indian countryside. As she later wrote to an Indian friend, "Wherever I'll go and stay, my heart forever belongs to Kalakankar. [illegible] my best to return back one day and to stay there forever."

She had not thought of remaining in India when she had left Moscow, at least not consciously, but now she began to hope that she might stay on and live the rest of her life beside the Ganges. But this proved impossible, or so she felt.

She was discouraged from staying by Mr. Singh's nephew, Dinesh Singh, who is Commerce Minister in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. She discussed her hope with Dinesh Singh in early January and then again later that month.

Mr. Singh, she later recalled, discouraged her. She remained on in Kalakankar through February, making a few trips to the countryside. The Soviet Embassy pressed her to end her Indian visit. She agreed to leave March 1, then won a postponement to March 8—International Women's Day, a major holiday in the Soviet Union.

Two Days in Lucknow

She spent March 3 and 4 in Lucknow with Aruna Kurami, Brijesh Singh's niece, who was recuperating from an operation, and then went on to New Delhi, spending March 5 in the home of Dinesh Singh. About 9:30 A.M. March 6 a car from the Soviet Embassy picked her up. At this point she still had not decided what to do. When she returned to the Soviet Embassy, she encountered the Ambassador, Ivan A. Benediktov, a veteran Soviet diplomat.

In April Mr. Benediktov was to lose his Indian post, a key diplomatic assignment, and be transferred to Yugoslavia. In part, a least, this apparent demotion was a consequence of what the Soviet authorities considered his responsibility in the Alliluyeva affair.

Mr. Benediktov, she felt, had been rude previously. Now he was rude again. Mrs. Alliluyeva had adopted the Indian custom of vegetarianism. The ambassador ridiculed her and ridiculed the Indians for such a practice. What a stupid thing for a good Russian to do, to take up this Indian habit, he said. His language was vulgar, sarcastic. Perhaps this tirade was a decisive factor. To a woman, deeply moved by Indian philosophy, by every aspect of the life in which she had saturated herself for weeks, the outburst came as a stunning shock.

Special Circumstances

Even so, as she later conceded, she might not have been able to carry out her decision to leave the Soviet Embassy and throw herself upon the unknown mercy of the Americans, had it not been for special circumstances.

The embassy was in a state of confusion. Two receptions [illegible] connected with Women's Day, the other for a group of Soviet visitors. No one had time to pay her special heed.

She went to her room in the embassy's hostel. She had brought two suitcases from Moscow. She packed her essentials in one small bag. The most important of its contents was a manuscript. She had completed the manuscript three years previously, setting down in it the impressions of her strange life as what one of her American friends-to-be would later call "the little princess of the Kremlin."

The manuscript contained her impressions of her father; of her mother who had shot herself on Nov. 7, 1932; of her two brothers, Yakov, born from Stalin's first marriage, who perished in World War II, and Vasily, who died in an auto accident in Kazan in 1962.

Completed Before 1964

All of this, and much more, she had set down, completing her manuscript even before she met Brijesh Singh, who came to work in 1964 in the publishing house where Mrs. Alliluyeva was an English translator.

The manuscript was written for publication primarily in the Soviet Union, but in other countries as well. She knew, when it was completed, that it could not then be published in her native country. But she hoped that eventually it might appear in Russia for she was not then, nor did she consider herself later, anything but a Soviet citizen.

She did not consider herself a political figure. She tod her Indian friends, "I hate politics." She thought of herself as a writer, as a member of the literary intelligentsia and it was the Moscow writers and critics who provided the circle of her friends.

Among them were those who, like herself wrote "for the drawer" in the Russian phrase, meaning works that could not be published because of prevailing political conditions.

Brought Her Manuscript

When she came to India, having been granted permission, after repeated requests, to bring Brijesh Singh's ashes to his homeland, she also brought her manuscript. What she proposed to do with it is not clear. Perhaps, it was not clear to her. Perhaps, she thought its publication might be arranged. Perhaps, she thought it might be left with Indian friends to be published at some later date.

Now, on the evening of March 6, she stood in the lobby of the United States Embassy talking with the Marine guard, the manuscript in her suitcase. What happened next happened with remarkable swiftness. The guard within minutes got through to embassy officials, who quickly grasped the remarkable essentials of what

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In essence, she said, she had determined not to return to Moscow and wished American help. She could not remain in India, she said.

In a little more than five hours, she was aboard a Qantas flight that left New Delhi at 1:14 A.M., March 7, bound for Rome with a Russian-speaking officer of the Central Intelligence Agency, Robert F. Rayle, accompanying her.

She had a United States visa stamped in her passport, but where she would actually go beyond Rome was uncertain. The visa was to enable her to stay a few days in Rome without the formality of an Italian visa. This was a device to gain a little breathing spell while Washington and other governments made up their minds about what to do with what one of her Indian friends called "this most gentle lady."

The Qantas plane touched down in Rome at 7:45 A.M. At this point, no one except a few Americans knew what had happened. The Soviet Embassy in New Delhi thought she had gone back to Kalakankar.

The United States Embassy in Rome put her in hiding while the next move was planned. One thing Washington quickly decided. Whatever was done, every effort would be made to prevent the affair from damaging United States-Soviet relations. For this reason it was decided to see whether the Swiss might give her temporary refuge.

It was also quickly recognized that in Mr. Kennan's words, she was not "a 'defector' in the usual 'cold war' sense" and should, if possible, not be taken over as a ward or a creature of the Central Intelligence Agency or any other government agency.

At this point Washington did not know of the manuscript nor of its contents. Not about until March 9 did Washington learn that a manuscript existed. The immediate reaction was that the document should be evaluated from a historical viewpoint.

March 10 was a Friday. Mr. Kennan, his own two manuscripts safely in the hands of his publishers, had abandoned Princeton for the serenity of his Pennsylvania farm. He needed a few days' relaxation badly for he had a heavy schedule ahead—lectures at Harvard and, beyond that, two months of speaking engagements in Europe and Africa. He wanted a few days in the countryside to clear his mind, to think of the problems of foreign policy that he proposed to discuss.

A Call From Washington

It was about noon when the telephone rang in his farm home. It was an old friend from Government days, calling from Washington. He wanted Mr. Kennan's advice and guidance as a historian. Mr. Kennan had interested himself in certain problems of the Stalin period. The Washington caller knew and he had been advised that Mrs. Alliluyeva had written a manuscript that touched on her father's rule.

Would Mr. Kennan look at the manuscript and make some suggestions? Mr. Kennan readily agreed.

That day, March 10, Mrs. Alliluyeva had been scheduled to fly to Geneva. Passage had been booked for her and for Mr. Rayle, the C.I.A. officer, to leave on a Swissair flight at 7:45 P.M.

But by this time, after nearly four days in Rome, the press had discovered that she was there. They descended on the airport to try to cover her departure.

Elaborate plans had been made by the Italian police to keep the press from reaching Mrs. Alliluyeva—too elaborate, as it turned out. To foil the newsmen Mr. Rayle had been hidden in one room at the airport, Stalin's daughter in another. They were to be brought individually to the plane.

Mr. Rayle came aboard according to plan. But Mrs. Alliluyeva did not appear. The plane filled up. Newsmen and photographers milled about. The departure time neared.

Mr. Rayle was frantic. He asked that the aircraft be held until she arrived. But the crew refused. The take-off neared. The portable stairs were wheeled away.

Refused to Move

Mr. Rayle planted himself in the open aircraft door. He refused to move. He did not know where his charge was. But he would not go without her. Finally, the stairs were returned and he debarked. The police who had escorted him to the plane had no idea of where Mrs. Alliluyeva was.

Frantically, Mr. Rayle went from one official to another. Finally, he found someone who knew where she had been hidden. He found her in a barren warehouse on the edge of the airport, alone in the dimly lighted chamber, with the silhouette of a rifle-carrying guard stationed at a distant open door.

For the first time since she had walked up the embassy steps in New Delhi on the evening of March 6, Mrs. Alliluyeva lost her poise. She was not frightened. But she was angry. "If I'd known it was going to be like this," she snapped, "perhaps I'd not have decided to come."

Her anger persisted even after they boarded the chartered four-engine Viscount that finally took off at 6 a.m. Then, she put her head back on the reclining seat and was asleep almost before the aircraft left the ground. When she awakened, they were coming down to land in Geneva. Her poise and good temper had returned.

Wants to Repay Cost

The charter flight cost $2,000. She [illegible] the contract for her book had been signed, was to repay the United States for the charter flight and, for her air fare from New Delhi to Rome.

On Sunday evening March 12, Mr. Kennan returned to Princeton from his farm. He was not feeling well. He went to the office Monday, but the next morning he stayed in bed. He had come down with the flu. But his mind was busy with the problem of Mrs. Alliluyeva and he was eagerly awaiting the manuscript that his Washington friend had promised. It was not until Thursday, the 16th, that the manuscript, hastily reproduced in Washington, arrived in Princeton. Mr. Kennan, still in

It did not take him long to realize that what he was perusing was not a political document, not an expose, but a literary and philosophical document, a human reaction to life in the vortex of the Stalin era, a remarkable example of natural style and skill, the work of a woman whose personality was complex and multi-faceted.

Even before he had completed his reading he telephoned Washington. He offered his services in any way possible. He strongly urged that every means be taken to prevent the exploitation of Mrs. Alliluyeva either for "cold war" or commercial purposes.

"It seemed equally evident," he said later in a statement written for The New York Times, "that what needed first to be done, in helping her to enter a new life, had best be done by private parties, not by governments or by anyone who had a commercial interest in her future."

He volunteered to be of use in this connection. Washington was receptive. It shared Mr. Kennan's view. Mrs. Alliluyeva by now had been placed in a secure setting by the Swiss Government. A skilled Swiss diplomat, Antonio Janner, 50-year-old chief of the East European section of the Foreign Ministry, had been assigned to her. Temporarily Mrs. Alliluyeva had a resting spot.

Mr. Kennan agreed to go to Switzerland, if she and the Swiss Government agreed, and to discuss her future. His proposal was accepted. He then began to consider how he might carry out his mission. He realized that Mrs. Alliluyeva had no knowledge of life or affairs in the West. Her first need was for practical guidance and counsel, particularly in arranging the publication of her book.

Greenbaum Approached

Mr. Kennan cast his mind about as to whom he might call upon to handle Mrs. Alliluyeva's affairs if she proved agreeable to such a course of action. Almost immediately he hit upon the name of his old friend and close neighbor, Mr. Greenbaum,

Mr. Greenbaum was a trustee of the Institute for Advanced Study, of which Mr. Kennan was a member. They often spent evenings in warm discussion of political or literary matters. Mr. Kennan knew that his neighbor was familiar with literary and publishing matters. If Mr. Greenbaum was willing, Mr. Kennan thought, he would be the ideal counselor to Mrs. Alliluyeva.

Mr. Greenbaum had been on the West Coast on business. He returned on March 21. Shortly before 6 P.M. the telephone in the Greenbaum home at Princeton rang. It was Mrs. Kennan. She asked whether Mr. Greenbaum could come over. Mr. Kennan was still in bed, but he had something he badly needed to discuss. At first the lawyer thought the matter might wait until after dinner. Then, it struck him that only something of transcendent importance would have caused his friend and neighbor to ask for him so urgently. He slipped on his coat and walked over to the Kennan house.

Talk in Bedroom

Mr. Kennan received Mr. Greenbaum in his bedroom. He had Mrs. Alliluyeva's manuscript scattered about the bed. He quickly sketched out the situation.

He was leaving for Switzerland the next day. If Mrs. Alliluyeva concurred, would Mr. Greenbaum agree to become her attorney and handle her affairs? It probably would mean that the lawyer would have to come, too, to Switzerland.

Mr. Greenbaum, just approaching his 77th birthday, was not eager to dash off. But he recognized the importance of the matter. He agreed to help. If he did not come himself, he would send one of his younger associates. Mr. Kennan said that if Mrs. Alliluyeva agreed to this proposal, he would send a cable saying, "Arrangements completed." This would be the signal that she wished Mr. Greenbaum to come over.

Mr. Kennan flew off March 22. He spent two days with Mrs. Alliluyeva. He found himself deeply impressed with her, with her wit, her humor, her intelligence, her frank, direct manner, her deeply humane attitudes. She was not, he quickly concluded, "anti-Soviet," but a bright, attractive woman, a member of the critical Soviet

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life and custom falling short of stated Soviet morality and presumed Soviet ideals.

Awareness of God

As Mrs. Alliluyeva described her philosophy in her statement on arrival here, she had grown up in a family where there was no talk of God. She added that as a grown-up "I found that it was impossible to exist without God in one's heart" and "since that moment the main dogmas of Communism lost their significance for me."

"I do believe in the power of intellect in the world. No matter in which country you live," she said. "Instead of struggling and causing unnecessary bloodshed, people should work more together for the progress of humanity.

"There are no capitalists and Communists for me—there are good people, or bad people, honest or dishonest, and in whatever country they live, people are the same everywhere and their best expectations and moral ideals are te same."

Mrs. Alliluyeva's literary abilities were genuine, Mr. Kennan felt. He was impressed by the trust and confidence that she displayed in him and her readiness to follow his suggestions. It was he who insisted that a Swiss representative be present when he spoke with her. Mr. Kennan was careful to emphasize that his ideas were only suggestions, that she must make the decisions herself, that this was the essence of the free society in which she now found herself. She agreed to this with a wry smile, but then added realistically: "What choice, after all, do I have?"

Agrees to the Advice

Mrs. Alliluyeva decided that she would like Mr. Greenbaum to act as her representative. Mr. Kennan sent back the cablegram, "Arrangements concluded."

The lawyer was not eager to go himself. He told his wife that he thought he would send one of his bright younger men —Allen Schwartz. Mrs. Greenbaum disagreed.

"You aren't dead yet," she said. "You should go yourself."

With that encouragement Mr. Greenbaum decided to take on the assignment. He and Mr. Schwartz left New York on March 25. They met Mr. Kennan, consulted on his discussions with Mrs. Alliluyeva and then went on, as Mr. Greenbaum said, to meet a client whom he had never seen, but who had consented sight unseen, to put her fate into his hands.

He found Mrs. Alliluyeva ecstatic about Mr. Kennan. She told Mr. Greenbaum that she had heard of the American diplomat since she was a young girl in 1935-37, when he was one of the younger secretaries of the United States Embassy in Moscow.

Now she said, it was like God to me," and she felt that a whole new world had opened up for her when he came and [illegible]. When he had first begun to talk about her having a lawyer, she did not even know what he meant nor what a lawyer's role in Western society might be. Now she learned that it was to be what she called a "warm-hearted man," a friend.

Mr. Greenbaum, an outgoing person, gave his new client what he described as a "pre-entrance examination." He told her what he would do for her; he guided her through a short course in contracts, in publishing rights, in powers of attorney. He found that she had never had a bank account and had only a vague notion of the value of money.

She did have a few desires, she said humorously. She hoped that her book might earn enough so that she could have a car and a dog. The dog, she decided, should be a "gypsy" dog because she was leading a gypsy life. But she did not know whether Mr. Greenbaum could find a dog of that breed.

As for the rest of the money, she did not care. Perhaps, it could go to charity, or to the Swiss, who had been so kind to her. Mr. Greenbaum gently sought to show her that she would have need of money in the West, to support herself, to maintain her independence. There would be enough money, of course, to guarantee her security for her writings had a major market value.

Concern for Children

One great problem overhung Mrs. Alliluyeva's decision. This was that of her children, to whom she was devoted — 21-year-old Iosif and 16-year-old Yekaterina. She had left them behind in her five-room apartment, in a big grey-stucco building across the Moskva River from the Kremlin.

Iosif, named for his grandfather, was the son of her first husband, Grigory Morozov, now a law professor in Moscow. Iosif was married and with his wife, Yelena Voznesenskava, 20, attended Moscow University.

Yekaterina was the daughter of Mrs. Alliluyeva's second husband, Yuri A. Zhdanov, son of Andrei A. Zhdanov, a close associate of Stalin. Mrs. Alliluyeva was married to Yuri Zhdanov in 1948 after having been divorced from Mr. Morozov.

While she felt that her children, being the grandchildren of Stalin, were not likely to suffer any ill consequences, she nonetheless worried deeply about them. She did not wish them to misunderstand and touched on this in her statement issued here.

"I don't want to be misunderstood by anyone, especially my own children and my friends in Russia," she said.

A Close-Knit Family

Mrs. Alliluyeva and her children were a close-knit family. Would she be able to hear from them? Would they comprehend her actions? Would they feel her deep, continued love for them? These were questions that troubled her but she finally resolved.

"Despite the strong motives and deep desires which have led me to the United States," she said in her statement, "I cannot forget that my children are in Moscow. But I know they will understand me and what I have done. They also belong to the new generation in our country which does not want to be fooled by old ideas. They also want to make their own conclusions about life.

"Let God help them, I know they will not reject me and one day we shall meet. I will wait for that."

On March 30 Mr. Greenbaum took the plane back to New York. He was authorized to represent Mrs. Alliluyeva not only in literary matters, but in all her personal affairs.

The immediate question to decide was what to do with her book.

Mr. Greenbaum found that Mrs. Alliluyeva had received hundreds of offers and proposals. Nearly every reputable publishing company, every substantial magazine, newspaper and broadcasting organization in the world had submitted bids, many of them open-ended bids. It was evident that the proceeds of any writing that Mrs. Alliluyeva did was going to make her a well-to-do woman.

The problem that Mr. Greenbaum had to resolve was whether to offer the book for general bidding or make direct and individual arrangements. He pondered the matter on the plane en route to the United States.

He was not by any means entirely a free agent in how he handled the publishing matters. The question of publishing and public statements about or by Mrs. Alliluyeva was delicate so far as the Swiss Government was concerned.

She had been admitted only temporarily and with the proviso that there be no publicity and no writing activity on her part. She was not permitted under the terms of her entry to engage in political agitation or anything which might be characterized in that category.

The Soviet government had demonstrated with the Swiss about their giving Mrs. Alliluyeva refuge. But the Swiss stood by the temporary asylum agreement. If any word of books or writing or contracts had leaked out, the Swiss would have felt compelled to request that she move on.

This, too, involved further difficulty. Mrs. Alliluyeva did not know where she wished to go. She still yearned to return to India although she had been distressed by the attitude of the Indian authorities. She had not yet made up her mind to come to the United States.

Mr. Greenbaum had an explosive problem on his hands. If he made public the fact that Mrs. Alliluyeva had written a book and opened it up to general bidding, he would automatically disturb Mrs. Alliluyeva's security.

Publisher Is Chosen

He pondered the matter. For many years his firm, Greenbaum, Wolf & Ernst had represented Harper & Row. Mr. Greenbaum respected the publishing house. He was confident that it would do as well or better with the book as any publisher.

Before Mr. Greenbaum arrived in New York his mind was made up. He would offer it to Harper & Row as discretely as possible. With good luck and good management he could make the necessary arrangements confidentially and have the matter determined by the time Mrs. Alliluyeva made up her mind where she would go.

Mr. Greenbaum returned here March 30. That weekend he went to his old friend, Cass Canfield, chairman ofHarper & Row. He found Evan Thomas, executive vice president of Harper & Row, with Mr. Canfield. It was a fortunate call. Mr. Canfield was leaving the next day for an extended absence from the country.

There was no question about Harper & Row's interest. It was merely a matter of negotiating details. Mr. Canfield authorized Mr. Thomas to carry on the negotiations. Al that remained were questions of money and publication.

She Decides to Come

Meantime, Mrs. Alliluyeva came to a decision. She would come to the United States. Plans now moved rapidly. For, under the asylum agreement, once the publishing announcement was made the Swiss would be compelled to ask her to leave.

But now, she would be able to come to the United States, as a private person, in private hands, by her own choice, with arrangements of her own approval. She had her personal counsel, Mr. Greenbaum.

The task of the multitude o arrangements fell upon him, Mr. Schwartz and his own associates. Mr. Kennan, his role as intermediary and adviser concluded, was once again caught up in his own intense schedule of scholarly activity. To his way of thinking, the arrival of Mrs. Alliluyeva in the United States provided a time oft esting, possibly severe testing, of the American traditions of justice and fair play.

"Svetlana Alliluyeva," he emphasized in a statement on his role in her affairs, "is not primarily a political person. She is a person whose interests are primarily literary and humane.

"She loves her country and hopes, with her writing and her activity outside Russia, to bring benefit to it and not harm. She has no desire to lend herself either to commercial or political exploitation. Whether we in this country can take her on these terms and concede to her the necessay privacy and normality of atmosphere to permit [illegible] this way, remains to be seen."

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